

Message Text

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SUBJECT: INTERVIEW WITH FORMER AMBASSADOR LINCOLN GORDON
CONCERNING 1962/1964 POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

REFS: A) BRASILIA 0906, B) BRASILIA 0505

1. JANUARY INTERVIEW WITH FORMER AMBASSADOR LINCOLN GORDON APPEARED VEJA MAGAZINE OF MARCH 9 AND WAS SUBSEQUENTLY SUMMARIZED IN RIO'S JORNAL DO BRASIL. AMBASSADOR GORDON CLAIMED THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SPENT OVER ONE MILLION AND POSSIBLY AS MUCH AS FIVE MILLION DOLLARS IN THE 1962 BRAZILIAN CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS. GORDON IS QUOTED AS SAYING THIS WAS NOT MUCH MONEY WHEN CONSIDERED ON A PER-CANDIDATE BASIS. THE MONEY WAS BASICALLY SPENT FOR PUBLICITY BY INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES.

2. AS REPORTED IN VEJA, AMBASSADOR GORDON'S COMMENTS SUGGEST THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTIONS WERE MADE BY THE CIA TO VARIOUS BRAZILIAN CANDIDATES THROUGH A NUMBER OF CHANNELS INCLUDING THE INSTITUTO BRASILEIRO DE ACAO DEMOCRATICA (IBAD), MIXED BRAZILIAN-AMERICAN COMPANIES AND OTHER REAL AND FICTITIOUS FIRMS.

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3. AMBASSADOR GORDON WAS QUOTED AS SAYING THAT CLANDESTINE CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT TO FOREIGN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS "WAS MORE OR LESS A HABIT AT THAT TIME," THAT IT BEGAN WITH THE 1948 ELECTIONS IN ITALY AND THAT "IN RESTROSPECT, I BELIEVE IT WAS NOT A GOOD POLICY."

4. CONCERNING THE 1964 REVOLUTION, THERE WAS LITTLE OF NOTE IN THE GORDON INTERVIEW. THE FORMER AMBASSADOR REPORTEDLY ADMITTED ASKING FOR THE DEPLOYMENT NEAR BRAZIL, AND WITH A SUITABLE COVER STORY, OF THE USS FORRESTAL AND FOUR TANKERS IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO GIVE LOGISTICAL SUPPORT, SUPPLIES, AMMUNITION AND PETROLEUM TO THE REVOLUTIONARIES IN CASE THIS SHOULD BECOME NECESSARY. CONCERNING THE SAO PAULO "MARCH OF THE FAMILY WITH GOD," AN ANTI-GOULART MOVEMENT, AMBASSADOR GORDON IS QUOTED AS SAYING: "THE INITIATIVE WAS 100 PERCENT, OR AT LEAST 98 PERCENT, BRAZILIAN."

5. GORDON'S MARCH 8 ARTICLE IN WASHINGTON POST IN WHICH HE DENIED DIRECT US INVOLVEMENT IN GOULART'S OVERTHROW, WAS REPRINTED IN MOST MAJOR BRAZILIAN DAILIES, BUT WITHOUT COMMENT OR ANALYSIS.

6. SENATOR DANIEL KRIEGER (ARENA-RIO GRANDE DO SUL), WHO WAS A LEADER OF MODERATE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC UNION (UDN) IN EARLY 60'S, TOOK FLOOR OF THE SENATE MARCH 7 TO ATTACK GORDON FOR MAKING CHARGES WITHOUT NAMES AND DETAILS, THUS INCRIMINATING ALL. CALLING CHARGES A SMEAR OF CONGRESS, KRIEGER DENIED EVER ACCEPTING OR SEEKING MONEY FROM IBAD OR AMERICAN EMBASSY AND SCORED THIS INCIDENT AS ONE MORE IN WHAT HE CALLED RECENT SERIES OF ERRORS OF US DIPLOMACY IN BRAZIL. KRIEGER'S DENUNCIATION OF GORDON WAS ENDORSED BY SENATE MAJORITY LEADER EURICO REZENDE. SENATOR MAGALHAES PINTO, NEWLY ELECTED CHAIRMAN OF SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, TOLD REPORTERS THAT AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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1962 ELECTIONS HAD BEEN INVESTIGATED 15 YEARS AGO AND WAS NOW A DEAD ISSUE.

7. COMMENT: CLEARLY GORDON'S CHARGES HAVE BEEN RECEIVED WITH CONCERN AND RESENTMENT AMONG VETERAN MEMBERS OF THE POLITICAL CLASS, LEADING TO A CHAIN REACTION OF DENIALS BY POLITICIANS ACTIVE DURING THAT PERIOD. SENATOR JOSE SARNEY (ARENA-MARANHAO), WHO HAS LONG BEEN MODERATE AND PRO-US, TOLD THE AMBASSADOR THAT GORDON'S CHARGES HAD LEFT HIM AND SOME OF HIS FELLOW SENATORS FEELING RESENTFUL AND BETRAYED. SENATORS REZENDE AND KRIEGER FAILED TO SHOW AT THE AMBASSADOR'S DINNER FOR VISITING SENATOR CHARLES MATHIAS MARCH 7--KRIEGER WITHOUT EVEN A PRO-FORMA EXPLANATION. VETERAN POLITICAL COLUMNIST CARLOS CASTELLO BRANCO, WHO IS NOT NORMALLY AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN ANY POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT, TOLD VISITING US SENATOR CHARLES MATHIAS HE WAS BAFFLED BY GORDON'S MOTIVES IN REVEALING THESE EVENTS TO VEJA. WHILE GENUINELY ANGRY, THE POLITICIANS APPARENTLY FEEL VULNERABLE AS WELL, SINCE THIS

INCIDENT SERVES AS ONE MORE EXAMPLE TO THE
MILITARY OF THE VENALITY OF THE POLITICAL CLASS AT A
TIME WHEN IT IS PRESSING HARDER THAN USUAL FOR MORE
PARTICIPATION IN DECISION MAKING. END COMMENT.
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